

PollworkerPulse

Spring 2007

The Newsletter for and about Miami-Dade's Election Workers

Your Hard Work Remains A Source of Pride for the Elections Department!

Pollworkers:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the support you provided during the 2006-2007 election series. You are a valued asset to the Miami-Dade County Elections Department; and your hard work remains a source of pride. It is a privilege to have such hard-working individuals dedicated to serving as poll workers.



As I express my heartfelt gratitude for your dedication and professionalism, I also want to remind you that the electoral process is evolving due to changes in State laws coupled with our efforts to continually improve our procedures. As a result, I hope you will view poll worker education as an ongoing process. While you may have taken training classes many times throughout your years of service, you will notice how the training classes are augmented, even if slightly, to provide you with the information you need on Election Day. That being said, the Elections Department is taking a close look at the training curriculum and will be making changes to facilitate your learning of new information.

While we ended the recent election season on a positive note, there are sure to be challenges to face as we move towards the 2008 presidential elections. I assure you, however, that I will keep you abreast of all procedural, statutory and curriculum changes. While this newsletter will be your primary source of important information as it becomes available, be on the look out for other correspondences that will come from the Elections Department that will keep you up to date.

Once again, thank you for contributing your time and your skills toward making the past election season a great success. The voters of Miami-Dade County and the Elections Department are fortunate to have people like you who will come out rain or shine to provide the knowledge and customer service skills necessary to make voting a pleasant and convenient process.

Sincerely,

Lester Sola
Supervisor of Elections

Let's Welcome Qualified County Residents to the Elections Specialists World!

Do you have computer skills, experience and feel comfortable with technology? Do you have friends or family that fit this description? The Elections Specialist position is now open for Qualified Non-County Employees.

In the past, only Miami-Dade County employees were given the opportunity to participate in this category, but the Elections Department is currently giving this great opportunity to all qualified Miami-Dade County residents.

The Elections Specialist is responsible for working closely with the Precinct Clerk and Assistant Clerk on the day prior to the election, and setting up the polling place and the electronic voting system on Election Day in order to ensure a successful election process. In addition to working with the Poll Workers, the Elections Specialist is responsible for important functions such as activating, deactivating and troubleshooting the elections voting system, accessing the voters' eligibility stored in a laptop, and other essential tasks.

If you or someone you know has the necessary computer skills, you are already on your way to becoming an Elections Specialist. For additional information, please contact Natalia Sarmiento at 305-499-8314 or at nms@miamidade.gov



On Election Day, Poll Workers are the critical linkage between the voting population and the Elections Department.

Did You Know?

Poll Workers do not just facilitate the election process at the polls on Election Day, they are an integral part of the tabulation process. Simply put, the gathering of election results that are posted on the Elections Department website and distributed to the media begins with the Poll Workers.

Your role in the election process is far more important than one might think. This aspect of the tasks can be called “The Real 3 Count,” and this is what Poll Workers are responsible for:

The Real 3 Count

When it comes to an election, there are three very important counts: Voter Authorization Slips, Public Count and register signatures. The purpose of these counts is to determine the exact number of voters who have voted in that particular precinct. This means that all three counts must match in order to be a “perfect” precinct.

The **first count** deals with the Voter Authorization Slips (voting pass). In order for any voter to cast their ballot, they will have to sign one of these slips. A voter should only receive one Voter Authorization Slip since they can only vote once. Throughout Election Day, these slips are placed in the Ballot Box and depending on the status (used, unused, and spoiled), they should be placed in particular locations at the end of the night. When the Clerk declares that the polls are closed, all Election Board members will assist in counting all of the Voter Authorization Slips. The number of used slips is the first of the three counts.

The **second count** is the total number of votes recorded on the iVotronic voting terminals. Each iVotronic terminal keeps count of every vote that is cast on that machine on Election Day, which is known as the public count. At the close of the day, the public count from each iVotronic terminal will be added together. The Election Specialist will print a Results Tape, which shows the number of votes on each terminal. Since each voter must have a Voter Authorization Slip to vote, the total Public Count must match the number of Voter Authorization Slips for each precinct.

Finally, the **third count** comes from the precinct register. Every time a voter comes in to vote they sign by their name on the register. The Check-In Inspectors write in their initials and fill in a bubble to indicate that the voter is going to vote and will receive a Voter Authorization Slip. In the days following the election, the register is scanned and the total number of bubbles filled in should match both the number of used Voter Authorization Slips and the total Public Count.

As a Poll Worker, it is imperative that these numbers are accurate. If not, a detailed explanation must be provided. Simply put, no one can vote on an iVotronic machine without a Voter Authorization Slip; and in order to be given a slip, a voter must check-in and sign the register. Remember that these three counts correlate and correspond directly with each other. This number plays an important role in the election process and it is critical to our tabulation and audit functions.

Did you know that the web based Poll Worker training is up and running?

Poll workers now have the opportunity to enhance their skills by signing on to the new web-based poll worker training site. This new training has been available as a supplement to our poll workers since November 2006.

Now, however, this training is mandatory for Inspectors. Effective immediately, inspectors will take the online training at the training site they are scheduled to attend and must complete the training with a passing grade in order to be assigned to a precinct. Clerks will still attend the traditional classroom training session until this tool is customized with information related to Clerks’ responsibilities. Clerks will now also be evaluated on a pass/fail basis and will only be assigned to work upon receiving a passing grade. That being said, all poll workers are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to brush up on topics covered in the training classes.

If you’re already familiar with this new feature - all the better. If not, please find time to log on from home, public library, or even the Elections Department Main Office because this type of training will soon be adopted as our primary training tool. Should you have any questions or require assistance signing on, contact Yvette Ricotta at (305) 499-8387 or email her at ELTRAINING@miamidade.gov

Habla Español or Creole?

We are in the process of recruiting bilingual Poll Workers to assist at the precinct on Election Day. If you have a friend that may be interested, please have them call Kaye Johnson at (305) 499-8380.

Miami-Dade Elections Registration Statistics as of 4/2/07

Republican	357,657	34%
Democrat	440,549	42%
Other	250,067	24%
TOTAL	1,048,273	

News and Updates

Florida's Governor, Charlie Crist, has recently proposed legislation that will mandate all counties using electronic voting equipment to switch to a system called "optical scan." As you are aware, Miami-Dade County uses electronic voting equipment (iVotronics) for our elections. If the proposed Bill passes, we will be changing the way we conduct elections beginning in September 2008.

You may be asking yourself what all of this means to you. Well, it means becoming familiar with new equipment and new procedures. At this point, the Elections Department is monitoring the progress of this Bill. For now, listed below are some of the changes that we will face should it pass:

- Optical Scan ballots are paper ballots similar to absentee ballots. Voters will check in at their assigned precinct and be provided the optical scan ballot with instructions to bubble in the circle next to their selection(s).
- Once they complete their selections, they will take their ballot to the optical scan unit, and insert it into the reader themselves. The optical scan machine will work like an iVotronic in that if a voter undervotes or overvotes, it will notify them before it accepts the ballot as a vote.



Sensitivity towards people with special needs makes good sense whether in business or public life.

- iVotronics will still be present at each precinct for voters with disabilities.

As you might imagine, this new system will require modifications in the way you set-up and close the precinct, print results tapes, and how you communicate with voters - to name a few. But do not fear, you will be sufficiently trained in advance and we will do everything necessary to ensure you feel comfortable with the new equipment and procedures.

So to reiterate, this is just an update on changes that may be on the horizon. We will keep you posted as this develops.

Has Your Teenage Son or Daughter Registered to Vote?

Since the academic year 1972-73, the Division of Social Sciences has coordinated student voter registration in the district's senior high schools. This activity directly reinforces The School Board of Miami-Dade County's commitment to citizen education. Eligible students can register to vote with Miami-Dade County Public Schools' social studies teachers, primarily through their American Government or Economics classes.

Since the inception of this outreach project, the Miami-Dade County Elections Department has been a consistent partner in that vital effort. Each school year, we provide the school system with voter registration materials and other general support. The total number of students who registered to vote during the 2005-2006 school year was 11,651. Since the academic year 1972-73, social studies teachers helped register an aggregate total of 249,496 students.

Upcoming Elections

If you are interested in working one of these elections, or if you know someone who would make a great poll worker, call Poll Worker Recruitment at (305) 499-8448.

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|-------------------|--|
| 05/01/2007 | North Miami Beach Regular Election (Registration Closing - April 2)
Candidate Qualifying Dates: March 19, 2007 - March 24, 2007 |
| 05/08/2007 | North Miami General Election (Registration Closing - April 9)
Candidate Qualifying Dates: March 26, 2007 - April 3, 2007 |
| 05/08/2007 | Sweetwater General Election (Registration Closing - April 9)
Candidate Qualifying Dates: March 14, 2007 - March 23, 2007 |
| 05/15/2007 | North Miami Beach Run-Off Election (Registration Closing - April 16) |
| 05/22/2007 | North Miami Run-Off Election (Registration Closing - April 23) |
| 06/12/2007 | Key Biscayne Special Mail Ballot Election (Registration Closing - May 23) |
| 06/26/2007 | West Miami Special Election (Registration Closing - May 28) |

Thinking Outside The Box

Recognizing Alice Williamson, Clerk @ Precinct 252

During the January 23rd special election, I was dispatched to Precinct 252 to shoot some action pictures for this edition of the Poll Worker Pulse. I made it to the precinct before Election Central had a chance to inform the Clerk. When I got there, I asked for the Clerk. I identified myself and told her the reason for my presence. The Clerk, Mrs. Alice Williamson, denied access referring to chapter 102.031 of the Florida Statutes that says "No photography is permitted in the polling room or early voting area." Although my demeanor reflected the highest degree of politeness and civility, Mrs. Williamson's sole allegiance shifted toward ensuring that the rights of the voters were protected. Finally, we were able to resolve the issue after consultation with Election Central.

I walked away from that precinct feeling that I have just met an election support personnel who would do whatever it takes to protect the integrity of the electoral process in Miami-Dade County. When I returned to the office, I tried to see if Mrs. Williamson's adherence to the Elec-

tions Laws also reflected in how she handled related paperwork. All early indications suggested that Mrs. Williamson's handling of the various Election Day paper works has been PICTURE PERFECT. Kudos to Mrs. Williamson!

Thinking about the old cliché that says practice makes perfect, I asked Mrs. Williamson if her effectiveness has anything to do with her eleven years experience in precinct 252. She replied, "I am so fortunate to have been part of this important process for eleven short years. Once I take the oath before 7:00 am on Election Day, all my personal interests become secondary. I take my responsibilities at the polling place seriously," Mrs. Williamson added.

Mrs. Williamson, once again, thank you and please know how deeply we appreciate your service to the Elections Department, and most importantly to the voters of Miami-Dade County.

—Phares Poliard, Community Outreach Coordinator

Carlos Alvarez
Mayor



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County Manager

Murray A. Greenberg
County Attorney

Miami-Dade County provides equal access and equal opportunity in employment and services and does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

"It is the policy of Miami-Dade County to comply with all of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act."

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